entertainment through cinema as well as the broadcasting mediums. This sector depends for its growth on an ambience—in terms of institutional, legal and financial arrangements and technological developments—which allows creativity and spontaneity to flourish. It is the constant endeavour of the Government to review policies whether of the Central or State Governments impacting on the sector and to take/recommend action to facilitate growth.

Some measures taken in the recent past include declaring entertainment industry as an approved activity under the Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) Act, liberalization of the foreign investmment regime for films and TV software, development of film markets abroad, recommendation and steps for reduction of entertainment tax, encouragement for multiplexes, liberalization of uplinking policy for TV channels, licences for private FM broadcasting and allowing DTH in the private sector.

Schemes for content creation for Jammu & Kashmir, North East and for funding of quality programmes have been included in the Tenth Plan.

Introduction of CAS

807. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the reason for introducing the CAS for more than 44 million TV viewers, is the pressure exerted by the set top box importer lobby;

(b) the reasons for Government succumbing to the pressure of the channel operators and cable operators and postponing the CAS launch to 1st September, 2003;

(c) unlike the fora of cable operators and channel operators with whom Government are engaging in a dialogue, which forum represents interests of 44 million TV viewers all over the country; and

(d) whether Government have involved the Consumer (Viewers) Forum in its negotiations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) No,Sir. CAS has been introduced for the benefit of consumers. The benefits are as follows:—

(i) Government has specified Rs. 72/- (Plus taxes) as the maximum price of basic service tier, consisting of not less than 30 free-to-air channels of different genres of entertainment, news, sports, children's programmes and music. Additional free-to-air channels would also be available to subscribers within the maximum amount mentioned. STBs will not be required for viewing these FTA channels.

(ii) Consumers will have the choice to pay for only those pay channels which they choose to watch;

(iii) have a control over the content, they wish to view.

(iv) It has been made obligatory for the cable operators to make provisions for rent, security deposit, repair and maintenance of Set Top Boxes (STBs).

(v) Some MSOs/Cable Operators have come out with consumer-friendly schemes through which the STBs will be made available to consumers.

(vi) Government has reduced the duty on import of STBs and its components to make them more affordable.

(b) After monitoring the preparedness of stakeholders to introduce addressability, availability of STBs and after extensive discussions with various stakeholders, namely Broadcasters, Multi-System Operators, Cable Operators, Consumer Groups, etc., it has been decided to roll out the CAS in a phased zone-wise manner in the metros of Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata and at one go in Chennai Metropolitan area, w.e.f. 1.9.2003. The notification issued on 10th July, 2003 to this effect is available in the Ministry's website, www.mib.nic.in.The intervening period will be utilized to step up preparedness for smooth roll out of CAS and educating the subscribers.

(c) and (d) The Task Force constituted to consider various issues relating to implementation of CAS including the price and composition

of basic service tier of free-to-air channels, included representatives of one consumer group from each metro, nominated by the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution.

Centre of IFFI

808. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to make Goa as permanent Centre of the International Film Festivals in India;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Goa has got necessary infrastructure to be a permanent place for holding mega event of the International Film Festivals; and

(d) the facilities proposed to be provided there by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) and (b) The need for a permanent venue of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) arises, *inter alia,* from the need to develop quality infrastructure, reduce infructuous costs of refurbishing a new festival venue each year and have a venue that evokes a festive spirit. In consultation with the representatives of the film industry, Goa is seen as a place that is already on the international tourist map and has a festive ambience. Accordingly, it has emerged as the unanimous choice for a permanent venue for IFFI and has invited favourable comments from various quarters.

(c) and (d) Goa has some of the infrastructure like accommodation, transport, communication etc. for organizing major events. Private investment is envisaged for creating international standard screening and related facilities.

Ban on telecast of Fashion TV

†809. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that Fashion TV. and Trend TV. are being telecast on TV. channels without any check;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.